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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

Lord God Almighty, you have set Your glory above the heavens. Righteous and true are Your ways. You alone are the King of nations. Search our hearts and examine our motives so that we may walk in Your paths. Help us to put our mistakes and blunders behind us as we strive for Your ideal of sacrificial service. Remind us often of the price that was paid for our redemption.

Today, give our lawmakers the grace to glorify You. Bless them as they wrestle with the complicated issues of freedom. May their debates be characterized by candor and civility. In Your unfailing love, lead us all to paths of abundant liberty.

We pray this in Your Holy Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business throughout the day. The majority leader announced last night there will be no rollcall votes during today's session, but Senators are en-

couraged to come to the Senate floor to speak on the constitutional amendment regarding marriage, which has been slated for floor consideration early next week.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business with the first 4 hours equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

As a Senator from Alaska, I ask I be notified if anyone makes a motion pertaining to any appropriations bill this morning.

### PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION RELATING TO MARRIAGE

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I rise today to start what I hope will be constructive debate on my amendment, S.J. Res. 40, the marriage amendment, which states:

Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman.

Neither this Constitution, nor the constitution of any State, shall be construed to require that marriage or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon any union other than the union of a man and a woman.

Before making my formal comments I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my colleagues who have cosponsored this amendment. It has taken countless hours of study and discussion to get to this point and each of our cosponsors has shown courage and commitment to protecting marriage.

I would like to express my appreciation to the majority leader for his commitment and leadership. Without the

support of Senate leadership, the public may never have had an opportunity to address this vitally important issue in a democratic body.

I also thank President Bush for his early commitment to the principles embodied in this amendment. Marriage, the union between a man and a woman, has been the foundation of every civilization in human history. The definition of marriage crosses all bounds of race, religion, culture, political party, ideology, and ethnicity. Marriage is embraced and intuitively understood to be what it is. Marriage is a union between a man and a woman.

As an expression of this cultural value, the definition of marriage is incorporated into the very fabric of civic policy. It is the root from which families, communities, and government are grown. Marriage is the one bond on which all other bonds are built.

This is not some controversial ideology being forced upon an unwilling populace by the Government. It is in fact the opposite. Marriage is the ideal held by the people and Government has long reflected this. The broadly embraced union of a woman and a man is understood to be the ideal union from which people live and children best blossom and thrive.

As we have heard in hours upon hours of testimony in various Senate committees over the last 2 years, marriage is a pretty good thing. A good marriage facilitates a more stable community, allows kids to grow up with fewer difficulties, increases the lifespan and quality of life of those involved, reduces the likelihood of incidences of chemical abuse and violent crime, and contributes to the overall health of the family. It is no wonder so many single adults long to be married, to raise kids, and to have families branching out in every direction.

Today there are numerous efforts to redefine marriage to be something that it isn't. When it comes to same-gender couples there is a problem of definition. Two women or two men simply do

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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